

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 22, line 9, with the following amended paragraph:

Furthermore, in the invention, the introduction of a carboxylic acid group is not particularly limited regarding the introduction into a polysaccharide not containing a carboxylic acid group by itself. A carboxyl group and/or a carboxymethyl group may further be introduced into a natural polysaccharide ~~not~~ containing a carboxylic acid group by itself, for example, the foregoing hyaluronic acid.